

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
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TO SECSTATE WASH DC IMMEDIATE 5299

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PASS OMB FOR DUNCAN AND JOHNSTON, AND LABOR FOR METCALF

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OECD, SGEN
SUBJECT: OECD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF SOCIAL
INDICATORS PROGRAM

REF: A. STATE 029292; B. C(76)221

1. IN OECD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON FEBRUARY 10 UK LED
OFF DISCUSSION WITH STATEMENT THAT OPTIMISM ABOUT
PHASE II OF PROGRAM SHOULD BE TEMPERED WITH REALISM.
BRITISH WANTED CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT NO COMMITMENTS
WERE BEING UNDERTAKEN AT THIS POINT ABOUT ULTIMATE
PARTICIPATION, SINCE COSTS INVOLVED IN ADJUSTING
NATIONAL STATISTICS TO AN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM MIGHT
NOT BE ACCEPTABLE. BRITISH SAID THEY WERE RAISING
ISSUE SIMPLY BECAUSE MINOR MISUNDERSTANDINGS HAD
ARISEN IN PAST AND THEY FELT THEY HAD AT TIMES BEEN
TOLD THAT THEY WERE COMMITTED FURTHER THAN THEY THOUGHT
THEY HAD BEEN.

2. SPECIFIC BRITISH QUESTIONS WITH SECRETARIAT
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(DYMOND) RESPONSES INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

A. DOES REFERENCE TO "CRITICAL EVALUATION OF
THE DATA PRESENTLY OR POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE" IN PARA 6,
REF B, REFER TO DATA ALREADY PUBLISHED OR READILY
AVAILABLE ON THE ONE HAND, OR TO ADDITIONAL MATERIAL
WHICH WOULD REQUIRE RESOURCES TO PRODUCE ON THE OTHER.

SECRETARIAT RESPONDED THAT ONLY PUBLISHED OR READILY AVAILABLE DATA WAS INTENDED.

B. ALSO WITH REGARD TO PARA 6, REF B, BRITISH ASKED CONFIRMATION THAT INITIATIVE FOR STATISTICAL SYSTEMS REMAINED WITH MEMBER GOVERNMENTS AND THAT THERE WAS NO IMPLICATION OF AN OBLIGATION TO GOVERNMENTS TO ENTER INTERNATIONAL REPORTING SYSTEMS. SECRETARIAT CONFIRMED THAT INDEED INTENTION WAS TO ASSIST GOVERNMENTS WITH THEIR OWN SYSTEMS AND THAT AT THIS POINT NO COMMITMENTS TO ENTER INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM WERE IMPLIED.

C. BRITISH ASKED FOR CONFIRMATION THAT PARA 3 OF ANNEX 1 OF REF B REMAINED VALID AND THAT NO COMMITMENTS REGARDING PHASE III WERE CURRENTLY BEING SOUGHT. SECRETARIAT CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS CORRECT.

D. ON DRAFT ENTRY FOR COUNCIL MINUTES, PARA 10(A) OF REF B, BRITISH ASKED WHETHER DERESTRICTION OF DOCUMENTS INDICATED ONLY SECRETARIAT INTENT TO MAKE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THOSE PROFESSIONALLY INTERESTED OR WHETHER THE SECRETARIAT INTENDED TO PUBLISH THE DOCUMENTS. SECRETARIAT REPLIED ONLY THE FORMER WAS INTENDED AND THERE WAS NO IDEA OF PUBLISHING THESE DOCUMENTS AT THIS TIME.

E. WITH REGARD TO PARA 10(C) OF DRAFT ENTRY FOR COUNCIL MINUTES, UK PROPOSED REWORDING AS FOLLOWS:
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"REQUESTED THE MANPOWER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TO REPORT ON THE EXTENT OF THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL POSSIBILITIES OF PHASE III AND THE RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS TO ALL PARTIES, AND IN THE LIGHT OF THIS REPORT TO FRAME PROPOSALS".

3. SECRETARIAT ALSO STRESSED THAT SUGGESTION FOR PHASE III PROPOSALS IN NO WAY IMPLIED DEADLINE FOR CONCLUSION OF PHASE II. RATHER THINKING ABOUT PHASE III WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO ONGOING PHASE II WORK.

4. CANADA EXPRESSED GENERAL SUPPORT FOR CAUTIONARY NOTE BRITISH HAD SOUNDED AND SATISFACTION WITH SECRETARIAT RESPONSES. CANADIANS THEN PROPOSED THEIR OWN LANGUAGE FOR PARA 10(C) SIMILAR TO BRITISH LANGUAGE PRESENTED IN PARAGRAPH 2E BUT IN ADDITION RETAINING REFERENCE TO DEADLINE DATE OF JUNE 30, 1978. CANADIAN LANGUAGE ALSO

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CONTAINED SENTENCE: "SHOULD PHASE III BE FEASIBLE
THIS REPORT SHOULD SERVE AS BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF
A WORK PLAN".

5. U.S. (AMBASSADOR TURNER) MADE STATEMENT DRAWN
FROM REF A AND PREVIOUS GUIDANCE. HE POINTED OUT
THAT HIS PROPOSED LANGUAGE FOR PARA 10(C) COULD WELL
SERVE TO SATISFY CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY UK AND CANADA
AND WAS CONSISTENT WITH SECRETARIAT'S EXPLANATIONS.

6. ITALY HAD A PROBLEM WITH REF B, PARA 6 (ON EX-
PLORATORY USE OF DATA) SIMILAR TO THAT EXPRESSED BY
U.S. HOWEVER, THEY TOO COULD ACCEPT THE LANGUAGE AS
DRAFTED.

7. OTHER DELEGATIONS - NETHERLAND, SWEDEN, AUSTRALIA,
BELGIUM, NORWAY AND IRELAND - COULD ACCEPT DRAFT ENTRY
IN COUNCIL MINUTES AS PREPARED BY SECRETARIAT IN
BELIEF THAT EXPLANATIONS BY SECRETARIAT HAD TAKEN
CARE OF CONCERNS EXPRESSED.

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8. AFTER EXCHANGE OF VIEWS SECRETARIAT AND MEMBERS OF DELEGATIONS (U.S., UK, AND CANADA) WHICH HAD PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE FOR PARA 10(C) MET TO SEEK SINGLE GENERALLY AGREED VERSION. LANGUAGE WHICH EMERGED FROM THIS EXERCISE AND WHICH WILL BE CIRCULATED BY SECRETARIAT TO ALL OECD MEMBERS FOR FEBRUARY 15 COUNCIL MEETING READS AS FOLLOWS: "REQUESTED THE MANPOWER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TO MAKE PROPOSALS CONCERNING PHASE III OF THE SOCIAL INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ON THE BASIS OF AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PRACTICABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES AND THEIR RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND IN ANY EVENT NOT LATER THAN 30TH JUNE, 1978."

9. ACTION REQUESTED: UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE MISSION WILL SUPPORT LANGUAGE IN PRECEDING PARAGRAPH AT FEBRUARY 15 COUNCIL. HOWEVER SHOULD WASHINGTON DESIRE MODIFICATIONS IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO US TO HAVE GUIDANCE BY OPENING OF BUSINESS MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, TO ALLOW FOR BILATERAL APPROACHES. TURNER

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Message Attributes

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